

A POLITICAL PARTY DOES NOT EXIST FOR WINNING ELECTION BUT FOR EDUCATING, AGITATING AND ORGANIZING THE PEOPLE

A meeting of the Working Committee of Scheduled Castes Federation was called by its President Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on 21st August 1955 which was held at Jairaj House, Bombay.

In this meeting the Constitution of Scheduled Castes Federation which was printed in January 1955 was discussed. Some amendments to the various articles were suggested and accepted.

The Report of this Working Committee along with amendments is as follows—Editors.

The Working Committee of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, Jairaj House, Bombay.

The following members of All India Working Committee of the S. C. F. were present at the meeting of the Working Committee called by the President, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, M. A., Ph.D., D.Sc, LL.D., D. Litt., Bar-at-Law, Member of Council of States on 21st August, 1955 at 4 p. m. at Jairaj House, Colaba, Bombay :

1. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar,
2. Shri Rajabhau Khobragade (Madhya Pradesh)
3. Shri A. Ratnam (Madras)
4. Shri Haridas Awode (Nagpur, Madhya Pradesh)
5. Shri J. C. Adimugam (Mysore)
6. Shri J. S. Bansode (Madhya Bharat)
7. Shri C. M. Arumugam (Mysore)
8. Shri Nilam Singh Gill (Pepsu)
9. Shri B. S. More (Aurangabad)
10. Shri R. D. Bhandare (Bombay)

11. Shri Hardas Asharwar (Vindhya Pradesh)
12. Shri G. T. Parmar (Gujarat)
13. Shri B.K. Gaikwad (Maharashtra)
14. Shri A. G. Pawar (Maharashtra)
15. Shri V. Doraswami (Mysore)
16. Shri M. G. Velu (Madras)
17. Shri W. S. Kamble (Berar)

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : “Friends, we are meeting after a long time. There are various reasons why we did not meet earlier. As far as I am concerned, you know that I am not keeping good health. What I have noticed is that you have not learnt to carry on the work of S. C. F. without me. The time has come that you must be able to carry on the work even if I am not present. I should be a sort of consultant. Wherever there is any difficulty you can consult me at any time”. After these preliminary remarks the various resolutions were taken up for discussion.

Resolution No. 1 : This meeting of the Working Committee confirms the Selection by the last Working Committee of Dr. Babasaheb *alias* B. R. Ambedkar as the President of the Federation.

Proposed by : A, Ratnam (Madras)

Seconded by : G. C. Arumugam

Supported by : B. K. Gaikwad

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : There are some old members who have expressed some doubts as to whether the S. C. F. should continue or not. But I am of the opinion that as long as the problem of Untouchability remains the S. C. F. should continue to function. The question may arise as to whether we should work in co-operation with any other party at the time of election. But you know what is our experience when we have worked in co-operation with other parties. But such question will be considered at the proper time. For the time being we should consider this question of continuing our S. C. F.

Resolution No. 2: “The Working Committee of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation is aware of the defeat which the Federation has suffered at the last election. The Working Committee, however, is in no way discouraged by it. Such defeats are usual and normal. A Political Party does not exist merely for the sake of winning election. A Political party exists for the sake of educating, agitating and organising the people. This work the Federation has done beyond doubt and beyond measure.

This meeting of the Working Committee desires to state emphatically that the S. C. Federation cannot be wound up until the problems arising out of Untouchability are not solved.

Proposed by : Shri H. D. Awode

Seconded by ; Shri M. J. Velu

The resolution was earned unanimously.

Resolution No. 3 : “This meeting of the Working Committee of the S. C. F. regrets that the Election Commission was wrong in declaring the S.C.F. not to be an All India Party. Whether a party is an All India Party or not must be determined by the number of votes cast in its favour and not by the number of seats won by it. In calculating the number of votes cast the Election Commission failed to take into consideration that all the second votes of the Scheduled Castes voters were cast in favour of the Socialist Candidates on account of the Election Pact between the S.C.F. and the Socialist Party while the Socialist Party voters did not give their votes to the S. C. candidates. If the votes cast by the S. C. voters in favour of the Socialist candidates were added to the votes cast by the S. C. voters in favour of the S. C. candidates, the total number of votes polled by the Federation would be far greater than the votes polled by the Socialist Party.

This Working Committee, therefore, urges upon the Election Commission to restore the status of an All India Party which was given to it at the first election.

Moved by : Shri A. G. Pawar (Maharashtra)

Seconded by : Shri V. Doraswami (Mysore)

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 4 : The following amendment to the Constitution as drafted by the President are made :

Amendment to article I : The clause 2 after the figure 1957 add the words” or such other date as may be appointed by the Central Executive “.

Amendment to article II : Adopt the following sub-clause as the sub-clause No. VII after the Sub-Clause No. VI, Sub-Clause No. VII reads as follows : “To issue literature and to conduct printing presses. Delete sub-clause III, IV, V and VI which are printed twice as they being the printers’ mistakes.

Amendment to article VI: (i) Remove hyphens from clauses 3,4, 5,6. 7, 8, 9 and 10.

(ii) After clause 10 add the following clause as the clause No. 11.

“The number of members of the Village Committee, Taluka Committee, District Committee and the State Committee shall be as determined by the State Federation Committee of each State with the consent of the Central Committee.....

Amendment to article VII : (1) In sub-clause II of the clause I, after the word “Federation” add the word “and Regional Secretaries.”

(2) Delete the sub-clause No. IV which is after the sub-clause No. V. It is printed twice.

Amendment to article VIII : (1) In clause 1 drop the hyphen in the second line after the words “consist of”.

(2) In sub-clause 4 add “The” before the word “President.”

(3) After sub-clause 5 add the following :

“6. The President shall appoint Regional Secretaries for different regions not exceeding five in number”.

(4) After clause 7 add the following :

“8. The Regional Secretaries shall do the work of organising the Federation within their jurisdiction and shall perform such

other duties as the President. The President may prescribe and shall keep the President and General Secretary informed”.

Amendment to article X : For the word “bi-annually” in clause 1, line two, add the words “Every two years”.

Amendment to article XIV : In sub-clause No. 5 last line read the word “Offices” in place of officers so as to read “access to all offices”.

Amendment to article XVII : In clause No. 4 line No. 2 delete the words “States Federation” and substitute therein the “All India Committee of the Federation”.

Amendment to article XXIII : In sub-clause 2, in fifth line delete the word “District” and substitute the word “State” therein.

Amendment to article XXVI : (1) In sub-clause 1 delete the word “triangle” and substitute the word “Rectangle” therein.

(2) In the same sub-clause add “11 Stars” after the words “Consists of”.

All these above amendments were put to vote and were carried.

Resolution No. 5 : “This meeting of the Working Committee adopts the Constitution for the All India Schedule Castes Federation and declares that the Federation shall be bound by it”.

At this stage Dr. Babasaheb explained that the Constitution has become bulky one. Some portion of it, therefore can be transferred to “Standing Orders” so that the Constitution may be small one.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 6 : This meeting of the Working Committee is of the opinion that the provision for the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes in Parliament, in State Assemblies, in Municipalities and District and Local

Boards be done away with immediately even before the next election”.

Moved by : Shri A. G. Pawar and

Seconded by : Shri A. Ratnam.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 7.—(1) This meeting of the Working Committee of the Scheduled Castes Federation expresses its resentment against the Planning Commission for not having consulted the Federation to assist the Commission in devising ways and means for solving the problem of the Untouchables.

(2) This meeting of the Working Committee of the Federation is of the opinion that in Planning Commission's proposals there is none which would abolish Untouchability or remove the poverty of the Untouchables.

(3) This meeting of the Working Committee of the Federation is convinced that it is the village system which is based on compulsory co-existence between Untouchables and Caste Hindus which is at the root of Untouchability and the poverty of the Untouchables.

(4) When two parties decide to co-exist it is important that each should understand the other's mind and mental attitude. Behind what he says we could have some idea of what and how he thinks. What constitutes the Communal mind ? How does it work and react ? Has it got recognisable corporate existence ? And, if so, is there a discernible pattern to be studied ; and what can we learn from it ? Where, indeed, do we begin ?

It is our failure to study the caste Hindu reaction and to look below the surface of statements and propaganda that has been responsible for our past mistakes. The kind of Caste Hindu mind with which we must be concerned is not to be found in Caste Hindu (but behind the iron curtain).

(5) It is the confirmed opinion of the Working Committee that this system of co-existence must be done away with.

(6) This, in the opinion of the Working Committee, can be done by establishing separate villages exclusively of Untouchables who are now living scattered in small groups under the sovereignty of caste Hindus.

(7) The Working Committee, therefore, urges upon the Planning Commission to reserve all cultivable waste-land, to make barren land cultivable and let colonies of Untouchables settled on such land.

(8) The Working Committee is of the opinion that to raise the necessary finance that salt tax be re-levied”.

Moved from the Chair, Dr. Babasaheb explained that he was thoroughly convinced in his mind that so long the Scheduled Castes live with the Caste Hindus our people will not live the life of freedom and liberty, free from oppression of the Caste Hindus. The Madras Govt, wanted to build new cherries for the Scheduled Castes but he was strongly opposed to this idea. He did not want that Untouchability should be made permanent by building new cherries. He wanted them to be burnt.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 8.—(1) The Working Committee of the Federation is sorry for the deaths that have taken place in the Goa *Satyagraha*. The Committee is, however, of the opinion that *Satyagraha* is not proper means of achieving the liberation of Goa.

(2) As understood by the Committee in *Satyagraha*, *Satya* is common ground to both. The difference is only on *Agraha*. In such a situation *Satyagraha* of the Gandhian type is possible and may be tried. But where there is no agreement of *Satya*, *Satyagraha* of the Gandhian type is a futility. The Working Committee cannot, therefore, advise the Scheduled Castes to join the Goa *Satyagraha*.

(3) Working Committee of the Federation is of the opinion that Goa must become a part of India and that the Portuguese must quit. There are three ways of achieving this object. (1) purchase, (2) lease, or (3) War. If Government is not prepared to accept any one of these three ways it is

the duty of the Govt, to tell the people what other weapon it has”.

Dr. Babasaheb explained that the *satyagraha* can be between two parties who agree on the “Truth” . The only difference between the parties is on *Agraha*. The British people could give freedom to India because both the British people and the Indians had agreed that the Indians have the right of Self-Government. In fact this principle of self Government was enunciated by Macaulay as far back as 1833. Macaulay said that the Indians were not barbarians. The Indians have a distinct civilization and culture of their own. They, therefore, should be given the right to govern themselves. But in the case of Goa the Portugues Government did not agree on the question of freedom of Goa. *Satyagraha*, therefore, as a weapon of liberating Goa is not only useless but dangerous. I cannot allow our people to be exposed to bullets and massacre. If we are given guns, we will fight. We, therefore, want to pass the above resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 9.—“This meeting of the Working Committee is not satisfied with the foreign policy of the country. It is neither calculated to strengthen the parliamentary system of Government nor the defence of the country”.

After this resolution was carried, the President announced that he has appointed Shri Rajabhau Khobragade as the General Secretary of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation.

Resolution No. 10.—Resolution congratulating Shri Khobragade was passed.

The Chairman was thanked for guiding the deliberations of the Working Committee.

All members of the Working Committee were also thanked.

This Working Committee of the Scheduled Castes Federation further resolved that the President be empowered to draft a resolution on Linguistic Provinces embodying the following points :—

- (1) The States be so divided as to maintain a Unity of the Country.
- (2) The administrative languages should be English and Hindi.
- (3) Bombay should belong to the United Maharashtra.
- (4) Hyderabad City should be a second capital of India making it a Governor's province.
- (5) Hyderabad State be divided into different Linguistic Units.

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